

Effective Evaluation Resource Center



Blumberg Center for
Interdisciplinary Studies and
The Equity Project

Insufficient Progress or Pattern of Strength and Weakness Option

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Overview of Today's Webcast

- Provide an overview of the option between Insufficient Progress and Patterns of Strength and Weakness in the eligibility determination of Specific Learning Disability (SLD).
- Share available resources and professional development opportunities to learn more about SLD evaluation requirements and eligibility criteria

Considerations Document

Available at www.indianaeeerc.org

Includes:

- SLD evaluation requirements
- Elements of Eligibility
- FAQ (based on state survey)
- Exclusionary Factors
- Example SLD Checklist

CONSIDERATIONS IN SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY EVALUATION AND ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

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EFFECTIVE EVALUATION RESOURCE CENTER
BLUMBERG CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN SPECIAL
EDUCATION
INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY



Elements of SLD Eligibility Determination

- 511 IAC 7-41-12(a)
- Five Elements of Determination
 - Two Inclusionary Criteria – specific to SLD
 - Two Exclusionary Criteria – specific to SLD
 - One General Criteria – applies to all eligibility categories
 - All 5 necessary for eligibility determination

Academic Underachievement

Inclusionary Elements

SLD Indicator: PSW or Insufficient Progress

Disability, English Proficiency, Cultural
Exclusionary Factors

Exclusionary Elements

Lack of Appropriate Instruction
Exclusionary Factor

Adverse Effects on Academic and/or Functional Performance

SLD Indicator

Can be demonstrated through one of two approaches –

1. Insufficient Progress (IP)
2. Patterns of Strengths/Weakness (PSW)

Decision about which approach is to be used can be made at the student-level. This decision is critical when planning the evaluation and preparing the written notice.

Context for the Options

Options in IDEA 2006

- A. Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement,
- B. Must permit the use of a process based on a child's response to scientific research based interventions, and
- C. May permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a child has SLD.

Options in Article 7

- A. Prohibited use of severe discrepancy between global cognitive ability and achievement,
- B. Permitted use of response to intervention process, and
- C. Permitted use of other alternative research-based methods, which is referred to as pattern of strengths and weaknesses.
- D. B and C listed as options to fulfill the criteria of SLD "evidenced through"

The National Landscape

Zirkel & Thomas (2010) surveyed 51 SEAs

- 20/51 states permitted the alternative, research-based methods (sometimes referred to as third option approaches)
- Vast majority of states (43/51) permit the use of severe discrepancy, leaving the choice to the local district level,
- 13/51 states required RTI, with 7 of these states also allowing severe discrepancy or PSW. Details of RTI not in regulation, but guidance.

Zirkel, P. A., & Thomas, L. B. (2010). State laws for RTI: An updated snapshot. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 42(3), 56–63.

SLD Indicator: *Considerations*

Insufficient Progress

- Written notice of intervention, 511 IAC 7-40-2(f), complete and provided to parent,
- Interventions aligned to student's specific needs,
- Evidence of intervention implementation integrity,
- Sufficient and technically adequate progress data,
- Progress data indicates normative discrepancy.

Patterns of Strength/Weakness

- Pattern regarded as “relevant to identification of SLD”,
- Pattern relevant to performance or achievement, or both, relative to age, state grade level standards, or intellectual development,
- Research basis for model used to operationalize PSW.

Choosing Between IP and PSW

Pattern of Strength and Weakness (PSW) might be appropriate when there is

- Limited intervention services due to student's grade level or area of academic concern,
- Limited intervention implementation data,
- Limited student progress monitoring data

Important to remember that the availability of the PSW option does not minimize, or deny, the importance of high quality and explicit instruction and intervention for students with learning difficulties.

Methods for Identifying PSW

- Often referred to as “third option” methods. Examples include
 - Discrepancy/Consistency Approach; Naglieri
 - Concordance-Discordance Model; Hale & Fiorello
 - CHC-based Operational Definition; Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso, & Mascolo
 - Hypothesis Testing CHC Approach; Flanagan, Fiorello, & Ortiz
- Resources

Flanagan, D.P., & Alfonso, V.C. (Eds). (2011). *Essentials of Specific Learning Disability Identification*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Flanagan, D.P., Fiorello, C.A., & Ortiz, S.O. (2010). Enhancing practice through application of Cattell-Horn-Carroll Theory and Research: A “third method” approach to specific learning disability identification. *Psychology in the Schools*, 47, 739-760.

Hale, J.B., Flanagan, D.P., & Naglieri, J. A. (2008). Alternative research-based methods for IDEA (2004) identification of children with specific learning disabilities. *Communique*, 36(8), 14-17.

Online Training Components

Written Resources

- SLD Worksheet with Examples
- SLD Written Certification Templates
- Presentation materials from conferences and meetings
- Report examples

Discussion Board

- Discuss SLD Evaluation and Identification with EERC Staff
- Discuss local SLD practices and procedures with colleagues across the state

Webcasts

- Pre-recorded sessions developed to learn more about SLD evaluation requirements and eligibility criteria.

Webinars

- Interactive web presentations about local policies, procedures, and case conference considerations for SLD.

Thank you for viewing our webcast!

Check out the EERC website.

<http://www.indianaerc.org>

Join us on the Discussion Board.

<http://www.indianaerc.org/phpbb/>

Questions? Email leah.nellis@indstate.edu

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